

## QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION: Q. 302, MAYA - HYPNOSIS

Om Sri Sai Ram

Prasanthi Sandesh, Question and Answer session, Question number 302.

**Q. 302:**

***Well, we have lots of ideas with regard to maya or illusion. The translation for the word 'maya' in English is 'illusion'.***

***However, there are some who say "no" to this translation. Some modern scientists say that the translation for the word maya is 'hypnosis'. So, whether it is hypnosis or illusion, it's all left up to you. But my task is to place before you certain findings or facts concerning this subject of maya or illusion.***

The first and foremost point is about the trance or the spell of *maya*, which is illusory. Man thinks his body is all there is. Thus, he pursues all kinds of empty activity. This is the first and foremost feature of a man who is in illusion.

It will be good to understand the word *maya*. Generally, people understand that *maya* is the name for any phenomenon that does not truly exist. Hence, people translate it into English as 'illusion'. That translation is totally wrong according to some of the modern thinkers. The meaning of *maya* is not 'illusion'. According to some of the psychologists, the meaning of *maya* is 'hypnosis'.

The meaning of *maya* is that man's mind has the capacity to manifest whatever it believes. Whatever the mind believes will begin to happen. Its belief becomes the actuality. Whatever it accepts and believes, that same thing begins to happen. So, *maya* is a faculty of the mind, and it is the collective expansion of *maya* that is seen in the world.

The state of hypnosis which all human beings together create throughout the world becomes what is called the *maya* of the world. For example, the madness of one individual means only that one person is mad. But if the whole crowd goes mad, then what would happen? It would drive the whole world mad.

*Maya* is the name for the mind's ability to become hypnotised. What would happen, if all of you were to close your fists and to think for five minutes that you cannot open your fists anymore?

Then what would happen if after five minutes I tell you that now you should all open your fists and, if necessary, use all your strength to do so?

Thirty percent of you would not be able to open your fists. The more you try, the more you will find that it is impossible! Your own fist! Thirty percent would not be able to open their fists, and this number could go even higher. The more you made efforts to open your fist, the more you would find it tightening. This is what those people who believe in hypnosis say. Well, it's also those five minutes of auto suggestion which adds to the condition that now the hand will not open. Both these factors are

nothing but the use of the faculty of hypnosis, and so the hand will remain closed. This is what has been observed.

Then it's also said that if you hypnotise a person and let his body lie in between two chairs, this is what will happen: So, the two chairs are kept five feet apart. Then, ask a man to lie down over them, with his head resting on one chair and his legs on the other. Normally his body will fall down because there'll be no support for his torso. But, if you first let the man lie down on the floor and hypnotise him, thereby giving him the suggestion, "No matter what happens your torso will not bend", then, after a few minutes, if you lift his body and lay it across the two chairs, he will lie there like a wooden plank. Not only that, but now, even if another man were to sit on his torso, it would not bend at all! What has happened to this man? His mind's faculty of hypnosis has been used and his body is simply following it!

Psychologists say that ninety percent of our activities happen as a result of self-hypnosis. A man coughs and suddenly many others start coughing. One man from the gathering gets up and goes to the restroom and many others follow. You don't realise that this is just hypnosis. It is nothing but your own faculty of hypnotising yourself. You are sitting quietly, as long as there's no trace of any coughing. But one man coughs and you are suddenly reminded of coughing. With that reminder, the hypnosis catches hold of you and your throat begins to itch.

There's another example given to us. An epidemic spreads in a village. Have you ever noticed that when an epidemic happens in a village, people start getting infected and fall sick? But the doctors and nurses who are taking care of them day and night don't catch the infection. If the disease is infectious, they should be the first ones to catch it. But the doctor knows that he is the doctor, so this hypnosis of being the doctor prevents him from catching the infection. He's too much engrossed in serving others so this hypnosis about the disease does not work on him. Others, of course, go on catching the infection.

See this hypnosis! We have heard about it a lot. But I never thought of it as synonymous to *maya*. So, psychologists say that the role of germs in this situation is only secondary, while the role of hypnosis is primary. That's what makes people sick or healthy.

Psychologists go on to say that if the people of a certain country generally live for seventy years, then hypnosis settles in the psyche of the whole country that one cannot live longer. Psychologists say that there seems to be no reason why a man's body should die after such a short lifespan as he can live much longer. But if the country has this notion of a seventy-year limit, then by the time someone is approaching the age of seventy, he has become hypnotised and therefore believes that the time of death is approaching.

Some have said that Gandhiji wanted to live up to one hundred and twenty-five years. Had he not been assassinated, he would have lived for a hundred and twenty-five years as he wanted. But six months before his assassination, he abandoned the idea of living for one hundred and twenty-five years and he started saying that it would be compassionate of existence to take his life away now. Somewhere deep inside him, the idea of dying had started to take root.

Life is mysterious. If I start implanting the idea of dying in myself, someone somewhere will start getting infected with the idea of killing me. Life is so interconnected, that the event will happen because of the combination of the two. But only the murderer will be held responsible!

People say that Jesus also was under the influence of deep hypnosis when he was crucified. That hypnosis led to His resurrection in later life. Why? Because he heard this from the Jewish scriptures. Yes, the Jewish scriptures say that the coming Prophet would be killed and would be resurrected. Jesus had the idea that he was the man the scriptures were talking about. That's what is meant about Jesus's resurrection

So if you see this phenomenon from the understanding of psychology, it seems that Jesus only fell into deep unconsciousness, but with the faith and trust that he would live again. This consciousness was self-hypnosis. He had accepted his own death.

But behind this unconsciousness, a deep mantra, a deep auto-suggestion, was functioning: 'In three days, I'll rise again.' So He went into a coma, into deep unconsciousness. This unconsciousness was self-induced. When his executioners thought that he was dead, they put his corpse in a cave and went away. But after three days, they found the cave empty. Afterwards, Jesus was seen at different places by several of his disciples.

Christianity has no record about Jesus, about what happened to him after this. If Jesus resurrected, then when and where did he die? They have no record of it. It seems that when Jesus rose again, he left Jerusalem because if he had stayed, he would have been killed again. He came to India and lived and died in a small village near Srinagar, as some people say. Today still the name of that small village is Pahalgam after Bethlehem. And there is a small grave in the village which is known as the grave of Jesus.

So his resurrection and his death all happened in deep hypnosis. If Jesus had really been dead, there would have been no way to resurrect or revive him. But he did not die. He went into deep hypnosis. It's a kind of deep sleep where even the breathing and the heartbeat stops. This is one school of thought. I don't say that I subscribe to this. It is only the opinion of one section of people.

So that's all about hypnosis. Yes, if you want you can speed up or slow your pulse rate. Even increasing the heartbeat also can be manipulated by hypnosis and it can also be made to stop. It may take about six months of experimenting to come to the point where your heartbeat will not be there, yet you will still be alive.

In other words, your body functions in obedience to the commands of your mind. Even now, in this very moment, when the body becomes sick it is only because it is obeying the mind. And when it is healthy, it is only obeying the mind. When it becomes old, it is only obeying the mind. And in living and even in dying, it has your deep agreement and command. When old people die, the deep reason behind it is that the moment they start getting old, they start wishing for death. Young people don't usually die. And the basic reason behind this is not their youth. The reason is that they don't think about dying.

Death is less of a physical phenomenon and more of a psychological phenomenon. Hindu scriptures have called hypnosis as '*maya*'. Whatever you are doing, whatever you are, whatever your mental state, it is all you're doing. Yes, hypnosis is all your own doing. If you are happy or if you are unhappy, it is all your own hypnosis.

But your unawareness of this self-hypnosis makes it very difficult for you to change it. So it becomes very difficult for you to change it. Yes, and not only that! If someone is unhappy and you tell him that he is only hypnotised about being unhappy, he will not agree with you because he cannot change.

But if you try some experiments with hypnosis, you'll be amazed. If you hypnotise a person and then put an onion on his head and tell him that it is an apple, he will eat it and say, "That's an apple." Then if you give him some rubbish and say that it is candy, he will eat it like candy and even the expression on his face will confirm it. He will enjoy it like candy and will say that it is sweet and delicious. What is happening to this man? Nothing special. It is only that his body is behaving according to what his mind believes.

Mohammedans, fakirs, Sufis and many others can walk on fire. It too is only hypnosis. It is just the strong idea in them that their feet cannot be burned. They believe the Divine is with them and so their feet cannot be burnt. Yes.

But the Divine is not doing anything. It is just their own idea, an intense idea that their feet cannot be burned. That even glowing embers will not burn them. Because even for burning embers to affect your feet, the cooperation of your mind is needed. Without the co-operation of your mind even fire won't have any effect.

So a man can pass through fire and he and his feet won't be burnt. If you think it is a farfetched idea, try it! Hypnotise someone and put a pebble in his palm, telling him that it's a glowing ember, and blisters from a burn will appear on his palm!

According to this principle, the ability of the mind is called *maya* or hypnosis. In this hypnosis, the world and what people create together is almost magical. The world that we are living in is our own magic. We are crying and weeping and screaming in pain. This happiness is happening and that joy is happening, and this trouble and that difficulty is all your own magic. And the key to it is in your hands in the name of hypnosis.

Therefore this is one perspective of thought. We don't have to agree with it. This perspective interprets *maya* as a kind of hypnosis, and comes up with these illustrations and examples. We can go deeper into this aspect if you are interested in this topic.

Thank you for your time.

Sai Ram.